

The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of overlapping, semi-transparent color bands in shades of purple, blue, green, yellow, and red. The colors are layered and slightly blurred, creating a sense of depth and movement. In the center, a solid black rectangle serves as a backdrop for the text.

da Capo

DA CAPO CHAMBER PLAYERS

HOMAGE

COMPOSERS
THINKING ABOUT OTHER
COMPOSERS

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da Capo

DA CAPO CHAMBER PLAYERS 53RD SEASON

Curtis Macomber, *violin*

Chris Gross, *cello*

Patricia Spencer, *flute (on leave)*

Marianne Gythfeldt, *clarinet*

Steven Beck, *piano*

GUEST ARTIST

Roberta Michel, *flute*

GREENWICH HOUSE MUSIC SCHOOL

Sunday | November 24, 2024 | 8pm

HOMAGE

Toshio Hosokawa

Stunden-Blumen (hommage à Olivier Messiaen) (2008)

Marianne Gythfeldt, Curtis Macomber, Chris Gross, Steven Beck

Hilda Paredes

Reencuentro (2013)

Roberta Michel, Marianne Gythfeldt, Chris Gross

Betsy Jolas

Ah, Haydn! (2007)

Curtis Macomber, Chris Gross, Steven Beck

Tristan Murail

Une relecture des Kinderszenen de Robert Schumann (2019)

Roberta Michel, Chris Gross, Steven Beck

Jonathan Dawe

On again, Ockeghem (2018) – written for Da Capo

Roberta Michel, Marianne Gythfeldt, Curtis Macomber, Chris Gross,
Steven Beck

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM



Toshio Hosokawa

Stunden-Blumen (hommage à Olivier Messiaen) (2008)

Like his teacher Isang Yun, Toshio Hosokawa is still a wanderer between the worlds of Europe and the Far East: "I am looking for a new form of spiritual culture and music of the Japanese people, with which I remain true to myself and my origins. We

must study the West again and more thoroughly in order to objectify our view of ourselves and to really get to know ourselves."

For his spiritual view of nature, Hosokawa had a teacher from whom he never had lessons: Olivier Messiaen. For the 100th birthday of the great Frenchman in December 2008, he wrote his *Hommage à Messiaen*: the quartet *Hours of Flowers* for clarinet, violin, violoncello and piano. The instrumentation is based on Messiaen's most famous chamber music work: the *Quatuor pour la fin du temps*. Messiaen, a deeply devout Catholic, composed this end-time vision based on verses from the Holy Revelation in 1941 as a prisoner of war in STALAG VIII A near Görlitz and premiered it in front of thousands of fellow prisoners.

Hosokawa has taken up the spiritual aura of this monumental eight-movement quartet in its Far Eastern coloring, as well as the endlessly long sustained notes that open the door to eternity in Messiaen's work. In Hosokawa's work, they begin by circling around an E flat in all voices, which grows from pppp to mp, gradually overlaid by trills in all voices, tremolos in the strings and air noises from the clarinet. Little by little, quarter-tones enliven the sound surface, including short appoggiaturas and small arabesques, until the clarinet starts a cantabile, which the others pick up in imitation. The result is a chamber music dialogue that always remains a sound study and at the end sinks back into the quiet E flat. —Karl Böhrner



Hilda Paredes
***Reencuentro* (2013)**

The title refers to my re-encounters with Mario Lavista, my first composition teacher and with whom I have also had the honor of being able to share the stage in various parts of the world in the decades following my time as a student. In

this score, the harmonic/melodic material is derived from the name of Mario Lavista. I also emphasized Mario's usual predilection for using harmonics on the strings. I took the liberty of quoting some brief fragments from *Calixto* for solo violin and *Reflejos de la Noche*, for string quartet, both works by Mario. This habit of referring to another composer, which although not my own, has also marked the musical language of Lavista's scores. This is a testimony of my appreciation for those important memories that marked, as softly as emphatically, the direction my life took from those years in my youth. —*Hilda Paredes*



Betsy Jolas
***Ah, Haydn!* (2007)**

My passionate attraction to Haydn's music originated in childhood with the piano sonatas I was then able to sight read. Much later came the revelation of the quartets (Opa. 20, 76, 77...), the oratorios (the extraordinary *Chaos* from *The Creation!*...),

the *Masses* (Nelson, In Tempore Belli...), the symphonies...

Yes, there was much Haydn on my mind when I set to work on my trio. I knew the choice was going to be difficult.

After much hesitation I decided to write a single movement trio on the theme of the last movement of the *London* Symphony; one that had haunted me for years for its outspoken simplicity, its strange setting

over the sole pedal D, and which today seemed even richer with pitch and rhythm potentialities.

I thus immediately singled out its key notes A G D E as a kind of cantus firmus. The opening prelude is a reverie on those four pitches which will then be heard again and again in various guises throughout the piece. The following fast section focuses on the rather obsessive rhythmic motives of this theme and by stressing this aspect more and more reaches a point where, so to speak, pitch surrenders to rhythm. But this is only temporary. Both components soon recover their just place and the theme is evoked again several times before being left floating away—as swallowed back in memory. Ah Haydn! —*Betsy Jolas*



Tristan Murail

Une relecture des Kinderszenen de Robert Schumann (2019)

This “rereading” of the *Kinderszenen* was written on the occasion of the recording of a CD whose project had been initiated by the cellist Marie Ythier.

This disc included an encounter (the title of the CD)

between the music of Robert Schumann (pieces for cello and piano) and mine (pieces for solo cello, and for cello and flute).

To illustrate this “meeting”, the idea germinated, and quickly imposed itself, of a realization that I would make of a work by Schumann, and which would constitute the most obvious link between the two sound worlds. This realization would therefore naturally be written for the three partners of the disc, cello, flute and piano. The idea quickly came to me that the *Kinderszenen* would be perfect for this project. Indeed, they have a musical, expressive, evocative potential, which far exceeds Schumann's piano realization. No doubt he wanted to remain simple and easy— in his mind, the pieces had to be playable by children. I am not sure that this is really the case...some pieces are not so easy,

others suppose gaps inaccessible to a child's hand. But almost all of them are small masterpieces, with great imaginative power, yet based on simple and concise ideas.

How then to approach this achievement, or rather what will become a "rereading" of a composer's view of another composer? I quickly dismissed the idea of an instrumentation in a plausible period style that would have added almost nothing to the original pieces, as well as that of an overly profound rewriting that risked ending in a betrayal. I sought, finally, to give Schumann's pieces the benefit of a coloring (as one colors old films originally in black and white), an amplification of ideas and feelings, while remaining as faithful as possible to the letter and the spirit of the score. I thought back, all things being equal because we are not at all on the same scale here, to the magnificent example of *Pictures at an Exhibition* orchestrated by Ravel. Ravel had not simply orchestrated the piano, he had sought to rediscover, hidden behind Mussorgsky's piano realization, the very essence of the musical ideas which had in fact preluded the realization for the piano, which was clearly only one of the possible realizations. —*Tristan Murail*



Jonathan Dawe

***On again, Ockeghem* (2018)**

On Again, Ockeghem, written in 2018 for Da Capo's celebration of Charles Wuorinen's 80th birthday, is an homage both to Wuorinen and to the 15th century Franco-Flemish composer Johannes Ockeghem, whose *Missa prolationum* is the starting point for

this piece- like Ockeghem, Dawe writes intricate prolation canons (where different voices play the same material at different speeds). Despite this contrapuntal rigor the piece is light-hearted and virtuosic in character, as the punny title might suggest. —*Steven Beck*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



The **Da Capo Chamber Players** has been hailed by *The New Yorker* as a “distinguished ensemble...at the center of the New York new-music scene for forty-five years” (May 2016). Winner of the Naumburg Chamber Music Award early in its trajectory (1973), the ensemble is about to enter its 52nd season.

It is a five-member “Pierrot” ensemble (flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and piano). The internationally acclaimed group has worked closely with today’s most respected composers, building a heritage of present-day American chamber music drawn from an enormous spectrum of styles.

In response to the Covid pandemic’s interruption of live concerts, Da Capo initiated **MUSICAL OFFERINGS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**, a YouTube series combining previously recorded videos with current conversations. Composers and performers spoke about the power of music to help build awareness for Human Rights. The series featured works by Wendell Logan, Luciano Berio, Chinary Ung, Chou Wen-chung, Valerie Coleman, and Kyle Gann. The series was viewed by listeners near and far and received enthusiastic responses.

Known for its unique and dedicated attention to every work, its dynamic performances are consistent with the highest musical standards found in performances of traditional repertoire. A further very important goal is to bring exciting American music to other destinations around the world, and to present musics of global cultures for American audiences.

The Da Capo Chamber Players’ annual New York series has been praised for “superb” and “gripping” performances. Ground-breaking programs

have included premieres by Elliott Carter, George Perle, Louis Karchin (*American Visions*, setting of poems by Yevgeny Yevtushenko, with the poet as guest reader), Joan Tower, Shulamit Ran, Chinary Ung, and countless others. The five ensemble members bring years of creative insight, involvement and artistic vision to our work and performances of today's repertoire, including over 150 works written especially for the group. Adventuresome programs with electronic sounds, works by young composers, collaborations with choreographers—all have sparked the imagination of listeners. Our Merkin Concert Hall celebration of the centenary of Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* (with Lucy Shelton) received a standing ovation, just as it did again at New Music New College in Sarasota, FL, in 2016.

In 2010, NPR named the ensemble's recording, *Chamber Music of Chinary Ung* (Bridge Records), as one of the five Best Contemporary Classical CDs of the Year.

Educational outreach has always been and continues to be a vital part of our work. The ensemble shares its love and commitment to this important repertoire with next generation artists through its ongoing residency at Bard College and touring engagements that feature masterclasses, readings and performances. Further—as young composers continue to develop, after graduation, Da Capo continues to program them, helping them with career-building.



A New York concert by pianist **Steven Beck** was described as "exemplary" and "deeply satisfying" by Anthony Tommasini in *The New York Times*. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School, where his teachers were Seymour Lipkin, Peter Serkin, and Bruce Brubaker.

Mr. Beck made his concerto debut with the National Symphony Orchestra, and has toured Japan as soloist

with the New York Symphonic Ensemble. His annual Christmas Eve performance of Bach's Goldberg Variations at Bargemusic has become a New York institution.

He has also performed as soloist and chamber musician at Alice Tully Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall, and Miller Theater, as well as on WNYC; summer appearances have been at the Aspen Music Festival and Lincoln Center Out of Doors. He has performed as a musician with the New York City Ballet and the Mark Morris Dance Group, and as an orchestral musician he has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, the New York City Ballet Orchestra, and Orpheus.

Mr. Beck is an experienced performer of new music, having worked with Elliott Carter, Pierre Boulez, Henri Dutilleux, Charles Wuorinen, George Crumb, George Perle, and Fred Lerdahl. He is a member of the Knights, the Talea Ensemble, Quattro Mani, and the Da Capo Chamber Players. His discography includes George Walker's piano sonatas, for Bridge Records, and Elliott Carter's *Double Concerto* on Albany Records. He is a Steinway Artist, and is on the faculty of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, as well as the Colorado College Summer Music Festival and the Sewanee Music Center.



Cellist **Christopher Gross'** performances have been praised by *The New York Times* — "beautifully meshed readings... lustrous tone", and *The Strad* magazine — "...the tone of Gross' cello enveloped the crowd [as he] showed energy and intonational accuracy, even when racing around the fingerboard".

He is a founding member of the Talea Ensemble, a member of the Da Capo Chamber Players, and has appeared at venues and festivals throughout the US and Europe, including Weill Recital Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Disney Hall, Darmstadt Festival, Mostly Mozart

Festival, Wien Modern, the Composers Conference, and many others. He has appeared on recordings on various labels, including Bridge, New Focus, Tzadik, and New World. As an orchestral musician, he has played with the New York Philharmonic and the Riverside Symphony. An active educator, he is a Teaching Artist with the New York Philharmonic and has given classes and lectures at Harvard University, Peabody Conservatory, Sydney Conservatory, Cleveland Cello Society, Brooklyn College, and the Walnut Hill School for the Arts.

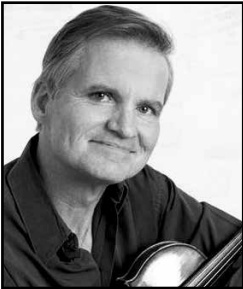
He is also a creator of Cello Solos Today (www.cellosolotoday.org), which commissions new works for young cellists and create online educational resources. He received his doctoral degree from Juilliard in New York and teaches at Lehigh University, where he was the university's Horger Artist-in-Residence in 2016-17.



Clarinetist **Marianne Gythfeldt** has distinguished herself in chamber music, orchestral and contemporary music performance on the international stage. She has played a central role in the music scene of New York City over the past 30 years as an ensemble player, and electroacoustic music soloist, and educator. Winning the Naumburg chamber music award

with New Millennium Ensemble in 1995 launched a wide-ranging career as clarinetist with Ensemble Sospeso, SEM ensemble, Collide-o-scope Music, Zephyros Winds, and Talea Ensemble. As a freelance performer, she has performed with Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and many others. Academic positions include William Paterson University, the University of Delaware and Brooklyn College where she is currently head of woodwinds and the chair of the Conservatory of Music. Ms. Gythfeldt's recent solo CD release of electroacoustic works written for her on the New Focus label was called "...stunning, Gythfeldt is setting a new standard for her instrument here." Marianne can also be heard on

recordings by CBS Masterworks, CRI, Albany, Innova, New World Records, Koch, and Mode Records.



The playing of violinist **Curtis Macomber** was praised recently by *The New York Times* for its "thrilling virtuosity" and by *The Strad* magazine for its "panache." He enjoys a varied and distinguished career as soloist, chamber musician, and teacher, and he has for several decades been recognized as one of this country's foremost interpreters and proponents of new music.

Mr. Macomber's extensive discography includes the complete Brahms and Grieg Sonatas; violin concertos by Martin Boykan and Laura Schwendinger; and hundreds of critically praised recordings of contemporary solo and chamber works.

His CD of Roger Sessions' Solo Sonata was acclaimed by American Record Guide as "one of the best recordings of 20th-Century solo violin music ever made." A solo CD entitled *Songs of Solitude* was named by The New York Observer as one of 1996's best instrumental solo discs—"Macomber's intensely human fiddle... seems an entire universe, sufficient unto itself." He has recorded for Nonesuch, Koch, Bridge, Arabesque, Naxos, Musical Heritage, and Albany; he has performed, commissioned, and made first recordings of solo violin and chamber works by, among others, Carter, Davidovsky, Perle, Wuorinen, and Macky.

Mr. Macomber is a founding member of the Apollo Piano Trio and a member of the Da Capo Chamber Players, the Manhattan String Quartet, the Walden Chamber Players, and the New York Chamber Soloists. He was for many years the violinist of Speculum Musicae and has also appeared with the New York New Music Ensemble, Group of Contemporary Music, and in chamber music series across the country and in Europe. He has been a regular participant at La Musica

in Sarasota, at the Yellow Barn Festival, and at the Monadnock Music Festival.

As first violinist of the award-winning New World String Quartet for 11 years (1982-93), Mr. Macomber performed the standard repertoire as well as numerous contemporary works in performances in major halls throughout the United States and Europe, and with the Quartet, was appointed Artist-In-Residence at Harvard University from 1982-90; with that group he also recorded 14 discs and performed numerous times on Public Radio and Television in this country, and the BBC in Great Britain.

Macomber is a longtime member of the chamber music faculty of The Juilliard School and the violin faculties of the Manhattan and Mannes Schools of Music, and has also taught at the Tanglewood Music Center and Taos School of Music. Other recent summer engagements have included Chamber Music Northwest and the Bard Festival. He holds his B.M., M.M., and D.M.A. degrees from the Juilliard School, where he was a scholarship student of Joseph Fuchs and winner of Morris Loeb and Walter Naumburg Prizes.



Patricia Spencer enjoys a career full of historic highlights: her highly acclaimed New York Premiere of the Elliott Carter *Flute Concerto*; her acclaimed US premiere of Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Kathinkas Gesand als Luzifers Requiem* (staged scene for solo flute and electronic sounds); her Chinese premiere of Ge Gan-ru's flute concerto, *Fairy Lady Meng Jiang*;

her world premiere of Shulamit Ran's flute concerto, *Voices*—the list goes on and on, including solo CDs on the Neuma label, and countless chamber music CDs with the Da Capo Chamber Players. Dozens of composers have written flute works for her. She teaches flute and chamber music at Bard College/Conservatory and Hofstra University. About the Elliott Carter *Flute Concerto*: " Ms. Spencer's impressive performance

had all the 'beautiful qualities' and 'extraordinary agility' Mr. Carter could have asked for." — Anthony Tommasini, *The New York Times*



Brooklyn-based flutist **Roberta Michel** is dedicated to the music of our time. She has commissioned and premiered hundreds of new works and has worked with many notable composers of our day. Roberta is the flutist and Co-Director of Wavefield Ensemble and is a member of PinkNoise and Duo RoMi.

Roberta has also performed with: Art Ensemble of Chicago, Cadillac Moon Ensemble (founding member), SEM Ensemble, Bang on a Can All-Stars, Da Capo Chamber Players, Ecce Ensemble, Portland String Quartet, Newspeak, Wet Ink Ensemble, Argento, Iktus, Wordless Music Orchestra, Ensemble LPR, and Cygnus Ensemble among others. Recent venues include: Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, The Kennedy Center, Roulette, Issue Project Room, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She can be heard on New Focus, Chandos, Innova, Tzadik, Bridge, Wide Hive, New Dynamic, and Meta Records. She played on the 2021 GRAMMY-winning album of Dame Ethyl Smyth's *The Prison with Experiential Orchestra*.

Originally from Maine, Roberta attended the University of Colorado at Boulder and SUNY-Purchase College and has studied with Robert Dick, Tara O'Connor, Alexa Still, and Jean Rosenblum. She holds a doctorate in music performance from the City University of New York Graduate Center and is a winner of the NFA Graduate Research Competition for her dissertation on the flute music of Salvatore Sciarrino.

Roberta currently teaches flute at Sarah Lawrence College, Brooklyn College, and music courses at St. Francis College. She is a teaching artist for Little Orchestra Society and maintains a private music studio in Brooklyn. She plays a Brannen flute with a Mancke headjoint.

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